

**WATER DIVISION
WEEKLY ACTIVITY REPORT - WEEK ENDING 6/23/17**

6WQ AND 6EN TO SEEK TECHNICAL INPUT FROM ADA LAB ON BIRD CREEK (OK) BRINE

BREAKOUT: Following recent efforts that appear to confirm the breakout of brine at the surface is likely from nearby injection activities, the Region will discuss current and planned efforts to further characterize the site and explore additional capabilities the Ada Lab might provide related to locating the conduit for the surfacing brine. The potential for using dye tests to identify which well may be responsible will also be discussed. In addition, reps from the two divisions have reached general agreement on the recommended path forward for the site and are developing a strategy document for senior staff. This document is planned for completion soon after Bird Creek monitoring data on the recent well shut-ins are reviewed. **Phil Dellinger, 665-8324; Bill Hurlbut, 665-8305; Chris Tingey, 665-8364; Mike Overbay, 665-6482; Arnold Bierschenk, 665-7435; Nancy Dorsey, 665-2294; Willie Lane, 665-8460; Carl Wills, 665-7276; Chris Lister, 665-6672**

6WQ UIC PROGRAM CONDUCTS SITE VISIT AT BIRD CREEK (OK) BRINE BREAKOUT: A

representative of the GW/UIC Section traveled to Bird Creek on June 14-16 to observe the startup of injection operations for Jireh Resources following shut-in for injection formation pressure measurement, and to investigate three persistent stressed surface area anomalies identified on air photos dating back to 1937. Nearby unstressed background soil had no detectable salinity. The three locations roughly trend parallel to the creek, and it was hoped this screening exercise could shed light on the possible existence and location of an undocumented wellbore, as well as guide next steps. Salinity measurements in the creek nearest the northern soil-sampled location have dropped dramatically, from over 40,000 ppm last year to 800 ppm measured on this trip, strongly suggesting an injection well cause. The startup of the injection well owned by Jireh, the Region's highest priority of the five wells impacted by the reservoir test, was late and intermittent due to ongoing maintenance work and repeated power outages. This diminishes the chances of seeing any direct impacts to Bird Creek from this well. **Phil Dellinger, 665-8324; Bill Hurlbut, 665-8305; Chris Tingey, 665-8364; Mike Overbay, 665-6482; Arnold Bierschenk, 665-7435; Nancy Dorsey, 665-2294**

PRESIDIO, TEXAS WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT: Region 6 has issued its final determination and concluded the NEPA assessment and review process on June 19, 2017 for the Presidio Water System Improvements project in Presidio, Presidio County, Texas. The City of Presidio is proposing to construct approximately 15,700 linear feet of 4-, 6-, and 8-, inch water supply lines, with a booster station and a new storage tank to connect the Pampas Colonia to the city's existing water infrastructure. Based on the facility plan results the project will also pressure issues believed to be contributing to line breaks. The completion of the NEPA review process allows the project to initiate final designs and finalize the project to implement the construction. This project is estimated to cost approximately \$875,000 to be funded with Border Environment Infrastructure Fund (BEIF) administered by the North American Development Bank. **Amber Howard, 66-3172; Gilbert Tellez, 665-5223; Salvador Gandara, 665-3194**

SPANISH LAKE MITIGATION BANK CREDIT REVALUATION: On June 15, 2017, Wetlands Section staff along with the Corps New Orleans District IRT (Corps, EPA, LDWF; USFWS was absent) met with the Spanish Lake Mitigation Bank sponsors. The discussion focused on the valuation of credits of the bank under the Louisiana Wetlands Rapid Assessment Method (LRAM). The sponsors' presentation centered on the role the sponsors play in opening the culverts in Alligator and Frog bayous where they empty into Bayou Manchac. While the culverts are located off the bank, the Mitigation Banking Instrument is written so that the sponsors may be able to claim enhancement credits for their efforts in restoring a more natural hydrologic regime to the Spanish Lake Basin. The sponsors also believe that while improvements in vegetation could not be measured, soil functions and processes were enhanced due to no longer being inundated indefinitely, therefore allowing them to receive enhancement credits instead of solely preservation. Once the final member of the IRT is briefed by the sponsor, the IRT will have a conference call to discuss the issue. **Raul Gutierrez, (504)862-2371**

WATERESHED-BASED PLAN FOR FIVE PRIORITY SUBWATERSHEDS IN THE GRAND LAKE BASIN ACCEPTED: On June 14, 2017, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6, Watershed Management (6WQ-EW) staff, with the input of State/Tribal Programs (6WQ-AT), accepted Oklahoma Conservation Commission's (OCC) Watershed Based Plan (WBP) for Grand Lake's five priority subwatersheds. This plan focuses on nutrient, sediment, and bacteria from agricultural runoff. OCC has paired with Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) to target Russell Creek, Elm Creek, Tar Creek, Upper and Lower Horse Creek. **Caitlain Thompson, 665-2262; Ginny Vietti, 665-7431**

EPA REGION 6 NONPOINT SOURCE PROGRAM ACCEPTS EASTERN SHAWNEE'S WATERSHED-BASED PLAN: On June 19, 2016, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6, Watershed Management (6WQ-EW) staff accepted Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma's Watershed-Based Plan (WBP) for Lost Creek, Flint Branch, and Spring River. The plan addresses Lost Creek's high lead concentrations and Spring River's 303(d) listing for lead and turbidity. Lost Creek is also found to often not meet primary body contact recreation standards due to *E. coli* bacterial contamination. These impairments are indicative of a high prevalence of agricultural activity, illegal dumping, poorly maintained septic systems, stormwater runoff, and mining runoff on tribal land. Projects to improve NPS pollution in the future were selected based upon priority and reduction of runoff. **Caitlain Thompson, 665-2262; TeAndra Taylor, 665-8346**

REGION 6 HEADS TO THE FIELD IN SUPPORT OF THE 2017 NATIONAL LAKES ASSESSMENT: Staff from the Watershed Management and the Assessment, Listing and TMDL Sections performed the first of eight scheduled sampling events at a lake located in the Caddo-LBJ National Grasslands, near Sherman, Texas. Sampling events support EPA's 2017 National Lakes Assessment (NLA). The NLA is an EPA-driven probability-based study designed to provide statistically valid "good, fair, poor" condition estimates of the chemical, biological and recreation status of the nation's lakes, ponds and reservoirs - the study has been likened to a "report card" of the nation's lake resources. Data collected by the regional sampling team will be used to define condition thresholds for lakes located within Region 6 ecoregions. **Lindsey Griffin, 665-2797; Selena Medrano, 665-2776; Rob Cook, 665-7141**

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA'S INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVES EPA'S WATERBORNE PATHOGEN EXPOSURE PROJECT: On May 30, 2017, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Institutional Review Board informed EPA that it has granted approval of the Waterborne Pathogen Exposure project. The approval of the project is from June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018. EPA Region 6's Tribal Drinking Water program is now preparing for a sampling event in partnership with the Choctaw Nation's Environmental Office and Health Services for early September in Tuskahoma, Oklahoma. **Jatin Mistry, 665-7483; John Baker, 665-7542**